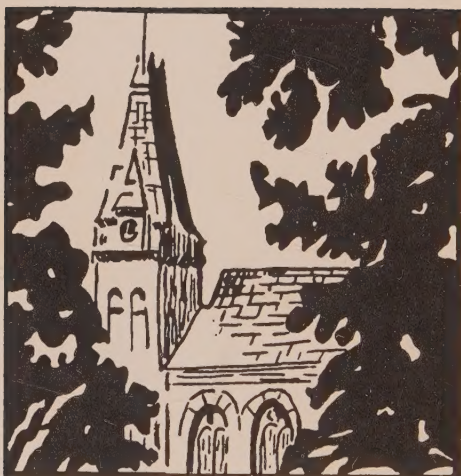


827
N58b
1936?

BEGGERS APE

1627



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SCHOLARS' FACSIMILES & REPRINTS

The Beggers Ape

1627

Richard Niccols
"

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THE
BEGGERS
APE.

827
N588
1936?



LONDON.

Printed by B. A. and T. Fawcett, for L. Chapman, and are to
be sold at his shop at the sign of the Ape, end of Chancery.

56595 1 May 61



THE BEGGERS A P E.

A Bout that Moneth whose name at first begun
From great AVGVSTVS, that *Romes*
Empire wonne :
Whé the fierce *Dog* of Heauen, begun to rise
To baite the *Lyon* in th' *Olympian* skies.

Whose hot fire-breathing influence did cracke
With too much heate our aged Grandames backe,
Lapping vp Riuers with his blaring tongue
T'allay the thirst which his proud stomacke stung.
Then did each Creature languish pant and beate
Vnder the influence of this horrid heate,
And I that oft in my low seated Cell
Had felt the burning of his fury fell :
Vpon a time *Aurora* shining faire
Went forth to take the solace of the ayre.
And in those Meades beyond the lofty Towers
Of that white Pallace, where the nightly houres
Haue oft bin spent in sounds of Musicke sweet
And actiue motion of the nimble feet :
Where earthly sonnes by night were seene to moue,
Whilest many hearts were fir'd with flames of Loue.
There I made choyse to walke before the Sunne
Had shewne his face, within our Horizon ;
But on those bankes by which each turning tide
Thames louely *Isles* with calme streames doth glide,
I had not walked long ere Dayes bright King
T'*Olympus* top his golden Carre did bring :

The Beggers Ape.

Whose Steedes with sting of his free lashes driuen
With such swift speed did gallop through the heauen,
That Natures faire productions/hiere beneath
Did seeme to melt vnder their burning breath,
The wing'd inhabitants both of earth and skie
That too and fro in th' open ayre did flie
To Thickets, Woods, and Groues, swift concourse made
To shroud themselves vnder their leauie shade,
The bleating *Lambe* and little wandring *Sheepe*
That in the open fields before did keepe,
Forfaking their free laire, all flocking came
To seeke for shelter 'gainst *Sol's* burning flame.
And I 'mongst the rest compeld by heate
Which on my head did violently beat
To seeke some couert shade straight tooke my way
Vnto a Groue which neere confining lay.
Where when I came the lofty trees, I clad
In Summers pride did cast a cooling shade,
Vnder whose leaues from *Phæbus* burning rayes
Sweet birds sate singing their Melodious layes,
There sate I downe vpon the grassy ground
Amid' st those silent shades encompass round
By leauy trees that Arbour wise did spread
There goodly armes thicke brauncht about my head,
But as I there my selfe did closely shroud
The chearefull voyce of many laughing loude
All suddainely did penetrate myne eare
Which did apall my sence with suddaine feare
And casting round about my rowling eye
Without the wood I chanced to espie
A ragged crue of folke all set around
About a sunny bancke vpon the ground
They all were clad in rags of Beggery
Taking no keepe of any faculty
Or honest calling to rely vpon,
For trade or true profession had they none;
And now to passe the tedious time away
With pleasant tales as in the Sunne they lay

The Beggers Ape:

Each one in course the other did succeed
Which much content 'mongst themselves did breed
And I to be partaker of their mirth
Being closely hidden with a hill of earth
Vnheard or scene conuey'd my selfe so neare
That all their chat I vn-espied did heare ;
Some told of battailes and of bloody fights,
And some of Ladies and of loues delights
And some of directiues and Tragicall
And some of lests and loues sports Comicall :
But 'mongst the rout one well I wot there was
That all the rest in fluent speech did passe
Who with good vtterance that became him well
A pretty story of an *Ape* did tell.
All which for that it seemeth vnto mee
Worthy their view whose thoughts delighted bee
In morrall discipline I will vnfold it
And in those tearmes in which the Begger told it.

Not many yeares (quoth he) are past and gone
Since heauens faire Virgin in her siluer throne
From forth her lap such golden blessings threw
As if th' old Age againe shee would renew,
And at that time the vast worlds Forrest wide
Deckt in the Summers coate of *Astas* pride
Did flourish and growe proude in lusty prime
Beneath the Sunne-shine of sweet summers time
There many Iouiall trees shoot vp on high
With threatning heads did seeme to vaile the skie
Beneath the shade of whose protecting armes
The Birds sate singing free from fearefull harmes,
The Beasts likewise might all securely goe
About the Forrest roaming too and fro,
For with the *Eagle* that skie climbing bird
And his consorts they late had made accord,
And vnto peacefull state all things to bring
As meete it was they made the *Lyon* King ;
And at that season many beasts found grace
That liu'd obscure before and in meane place.

The Beggars Ape.

'Mongst whome a beast that was of *Secrops* brood
Whome of a man *Ioue* in his irefull moode,
Detesting his deceitfull guile did make
So foule a beast, that no man could him take
T'haue bin a man, yet was it with such skill
That being a beast a man he fauoured still.
His limbes in lesser space then mans are knit
Beneath his Eyes his Nose more flat doth sit
And like the face which crabbed age doth spill
Deepe wrinkles frowne-like his front did fill;
There to his Apish limbs are euery where
Thicke over-growne with fallow coloured haire,
And him in land of *Apes Ile*, *Ioue* did place
There to abide and neuer show his face
Amongst vs men, where hee not long did stay
Ere' mongst the beasts lewd pranks hee gan to play;
For in the golden Age the worlds first spring
Euen in the pallace of the Forrests King,
His witty wiles he oft in practise put
Them to deceiue, for which his taile was cut;
Exiling him for euermore from thence
To the *Ape Isle* againe for his offence.
But he that long time there liu'd all a mort
His taile being cut, for comming to the Court
Of better fortunes now gan cogitate
And forth he comes to mend his meane estate,
His way vnto the Forrest straight he takes
And in his iourney this obseruance makes
Who liu'd disgracefull, who in fauour were
And 'bout the *Lyon* who cheife Place did beare;
The golden fleeced *Sheepe* he first did spie
Patterne of patience, and simplicitie
Grafing obscurely 'mongst the meaner sort
As being a stranger in the *Lions* Court;
" For who so beares simplicities true badge
" To liue in *Princes* Courts doe seldome fadge.
And though the silly *Sheepe* contented were
For that plaine honest life, which he did beare

The Beggars Ape.

Yet for his golden Fleece against his will
Hee was acquainted with the Courtiers still.
Fast by the *Sheepe* the humble *Oxe* did graise
Who for he sought not his estate to raise,
Was held in base contempt for his meeke minde
' Meekenesse in Greatnesse we so seldome finde.
The *Ape* being glad to see the *Sheepes* bad case
And plaine simplicity in such disgrace
Thought with himselfe as true it was indeed
That wily wit would stand him in best steed,
And on his way he forth gan wend a pace
Hoping at Court to finde such future grace;
That in the end he doubted not to bring
Himselfe in fanour with the Forrest King.
Where when he came himselfe he did apply
T' obserue all fashions with an heedfull eye,
The first on whome he any notice tooke
Was that high horned beast who in his looke
Beares signes apparant of his secret minde
To wit the *Goat*, a louer borne by kinde
For he the habit had of all cheife sleights
In wanton loues and Ladies Court delights.
On which most Gallants now their wits doe proue
To serue their Ladies and their Lemmons loue.
But he surpast them all for he could sing
In chaunting songs, and on the warbling string
Of Vyoll sweet thereto diuinely played
The sound of which would charme the chairest Maide,
For which he was of Females so approu'd
That they 'boue all the rest him chiefly lou'd;
Yet he with whally eyes and shaggy beard
And welked hornes so *Satir*-like appeard
That such a grim fac't fellow would affright
A lewd *Faustinaes* selfe in darkest night,
Thereto his body did so ranckly smell
That he himselfe might not abide it well;
But he that fault did hide with pleasing sent
Of sweet perfume when ere abroad he went,

The Beggars Ape.

The *Ape* him oft beheld in passing by
And in his seruice would his fortune try
By meanes made by the *Monkey*, his neere friend
Who on the *Goats* chiefe seruant did attend.
But loe not long hee stood thus all a mort,
Ere hee beheld at entring of the Court
A troupe of Gallants, rushing in the way
All proudly clad in strange and rich aray,
With wide-big-bason-lookes they all did gape
In passing by vpon the silly *Ape*.
For mickle pride (full well I wot) they tooke
To daunt a stranger with a scornfull looke;
Thereto, from fullest mouthes they tooke delight
With horrid Oathes, the golden Starres to smite,
Ne gaue they due regard, or Reuerend loue
Vnto the King of Gods the thundring *Joue*,
But all their *Paans* consecrated bee
To drunken *Bacchus* on low bended knee.
The chiefe 'mongst these that bare supremest sway
Was the fell *Bore*, who with the least delay
Euen for a looke misdeem'd, would hazard life
In any furious broyle or bloody strife,
With him came many Beasts that did delight
In sternefull rage, debate and bloody fight:
And therefore loued euer for to bee
Together with the *Bore* in company.
There came the *Tyger*, who withouten dread
Was into any danger headlong lead.
The wrathfull *Beare*, whom in his fiery rage
Nought else but blood and vengeance might asswage,
The *Bull* and *Ram*, who both couragious were
But wanted wit in fury to forbear.
Amidst this Crew a simple beast there was
To Court being newly come, to wit, the *Ass*,
Whom they with fawning speech and threats withall
So wrought vnto their will, that at their call
They had both him and his, and sooth to say
Inricht with golden store, hee was fit pray

The Beggars Ape.

For such in Court whose credit waxed bare,
So witlesse was hee and so voyd of care ;
For he of late had left his Countrey home
His Sire being dead, and now to Court was come,
Where all a flaunt, hee ryots and consumes
In gold, in siluer, silke and sweet perfumes
His old Sires, ill-got-goods now goes to wracke,
Farmes, Forrests, Fields, hee beares vpon his backe,
And neuer deemes what Fate will him betide
When all is spent by his vnseemely pride.

The *Ape* that had obseru'd with heedfull eye
The stout demeanour of this Company,
Tooke little liking to this kind of life,
For hee ne loued for to bee in strife ;
Ne fauour would hee with such perill winne,
“ But thought best sleeping in the soundest skinne.
Long did hee lurke about the Court in vayne,
Before his close intent hee could obtayne :
“ But hee that doth his Fate with heed attend,
“ Seldome but findes good Fortune in the end.
And at the last good Fortune being his guide,
An old acquaintance he in Court espide ;
To wit, the *Fox*, who found in Court such grace
That he about the King had gotten place.
For the Dread *Lyon* loathing Luxurie
“ The Canker-worme of true Nobilitie,
T'allay the pride that in the flesh beares sway
And banish loathsome Idlenesse away :
To spend his golden houres did still deuise
In Kingly pastime and faire exercise,
There to rich gifts, Prince-like he gaue to those,
That did themselues to exercise dispose ;
Thereby to purge his Court to ease inclin'd,
And base sloath banish from the Noble mind.
In which the *Fox*, his Soueraigne did so please,
Seeming the common Enemy of ease :
That hee himselve in mickle grace did bring
With the bold *Lyon*, his dread Lord and King.

The Beggars Ape.

But hee foule *Carle* (not as his King) did make
T his vse of exercife for vertues sake,
But gaue himfelfe thereto with this intent
To creepe in fauour with foule blandishment
To him the *Ape* in humble manner came
To scrape acquaintance and make knowne his name;
But the proud *Fox*, though him hee well did know,
Like a true Courtier gan himfelfe to show
With Elboe pride, and caft of scornfull eye
Hee stoutly stalk't vpon his tiptoes high
Disdaining to th' *Apes* words to lend his care
Though hee of yore his old acquaintance were.
And in fuch proud contempt hee paffed by,
That the *Apes* former hopes began to dye;
Being in despaire his meane estate to mend
Forfaken thus of his old fellow friend.

But the flye *Fox* aduifing all this while
How the *Ape* being wittie, prompt, and full of guile,
“ And that two working wits will foone preuaile
“ In any plot when one may chance to faile;
Straight fends vnto the *Ape*, and greets him well,
Bidding him come to him his cafe to tell.
The forlorne *Ape* being almoft in despaire
With double diligence did make repaire
Vnto the *Fox*, to whom obeyfance made
Thefe famous words in humble wife hee faid.

All haile (graue Sir) quoth hee, good fates attend
Your fteps in Court, ftill Fortune be your freind
And in fweet fhowers, th' aufpicious heau'ns down-fhed
Their bounteous bleffings on your reuerent head.

The *Fox* him thanking, answered in this fort,
But fay (Sir *Ape*) what wind brings you to Court?
Seemes you haue liued in fome barren place
And want lifes needements for to doe you grace;
For you be growne fo meager leane and wan,
That fcarce your legs your limbs vpholden can.
For which, I weene, you want that wonted wit
And iudgement sharpe, that feem'd of yore to fit

The Beggars Ape.

In th'ilke same head, by which you could at need
Both helpe your selfe and stand your freind in need.

Ah mee (Sir *Reynald*) sayd the wretched *Ape*
Of all the Forrest hardest is my hap
That I vnhappy wretch, thus as you see
Am made the scorn of other beasts to bee ;
Yet ne'rthelesse Sir, if of your grace you please
You of your bounty may my fortunes ease,
And set my wit in the old working way
“ Want of imployment makes best wits decay.

Now certes (said the *Fox*) yee say right well,
“ For custome doth in power so excell;
“ That vertues selfe in the most liberall minde
“ For want of it oft times decay'd we find
“ And vse being common made in vsfull things
“ Vice to insepable habit brings.

Then pittie t'were, so ripe a wit you haue
The want of good imployment should deprauē.
Read then, Sir *Ape*, what course you doe intend
And if in it my helpe may you befriēd :
Doubt not to find for old acquaintance sake
My furtherance in any course you take.

To this the *Ape*, deepe sighing, thus did say
Ah (noble Sir) y blessed be this day,
That with such hap good fortune did me greet
As with your selfe so happily to meet;
For well I weene, I onely hope to rise
By sage instruction of your sound deuise.
Then read (faire Sir) of fauour I you pray
What custome in the Court now beares cheife sway
To what thing most is that *Heroicke* mind
Of our dread Soueraigne chiefly now enclind,
“ For well I wot the subiect that will bring
“ Himselfe in fauour with his Lord and King,
“ What his Lord likes at least must seeme to loue
“ And of his fancy must alwayes approue.

Surely, said *Reynald*, this which you haue spoken
Of your graue iudgement giues sufficient token,

The Beggars Ape.

And know, that now the *Lyons* chiefe delight
Is to behold those that in nimble fight,
Can best pursue the wilder beasts in chase
And such as they be now in speciall grace;
For he with idle ease may not away
The obstacle to vertues best assay.
And therefore least good dayes may be mispent
To noble exercise he still is bent :
Ne doe I doubt but you by pregnant wit
To any exercise your selfe can fit,
And though of footmanship you be not slow
Yet none amongst the best of beasts I know
In all the woods with you compar'd may bee
For nimblenes and swift Agility.
By which you may in frowning Fates despight
Purchase you fauor in your Soueraignes sight.

Ah (deere Sir) said the *Ape*, ybleised be
Your life with length of dayes for Charitie
To me poore wretch. But say Sir, I you pray
By what step shall I make my best assay
To gaine the Forests King vnto my friend
“ A good beginning makes a happy end.

To this the *Fox* replied, Sir *Ape*, said hee
Well haue you said, yet that my busines bee
Meane while your wits for my employment frame
For in the Forrest wee will find good game.

“ Let Drudges by base toile there liuing get
“ The generous borne will onely liue by wit ;
This said, the subtle *Fox* in secret wise
The *Ape* gan counsell with such sound aduise
That in short space in Court he got much grace
When those of more desert could find no place.

“ For few there be, that for good guists of mind
“ Or vertues bare regard doe fauour find
“ Onely they rise that can by guilefull wit
“ Serue their owne turne with gainetull benefit,
“ The honest mind from thence is made to flye
“ When shamelesse ribaulds are aduanced high

“ The

The Beggars Ape.

"The simple-hearted are accounted base,
"When bold and impudent are most in grace,
"Vaine boasting *Thrasoes*, soothing Flatterers,
"Sly cogging *Gnatoes*, secret whisperers,
"Tale-bearing *Fleecers*, and false accusing Iackes,
"There beare best shewes vpon their golden backes.
'Mongst whom the *Ape* did beare himselfe so well
That hee in rich attire did farre excell;
And eke his sides with flesh so filled were,
That not a bone did any where appeare.
Ne, few him knew that knew him well before
T'haue bin the wretched *Ape* he was of yore,
For neuer more did *Proteus* change his shape;
For to deceiue, then did this wilie *Ape*
At first with lowly lookes and humble minde,
Himselfe in great States fauour he did winde,
With Sycophantlike trickes, hee tooke delight,
With euery Iacke to play the *Parasite*,
To sooth, to cogge, to fawne, to lye, to sweare,
To crouch, to glose, and patiently to beare
All grosse abuse, to take vp euery word
False from the lying lippes of some great Lord:
To laugh, looke sad, to like and dislike both,
To say and vn say, sweare and forswear troth.
But when by humble seruice and long suite
In Court hee came to bee of some repute,
Hee many subtle sleights did quickly find
T'exhalt himselfe when others came behind:
Then waxt hee proud, and bent his guilefull wit
To turne all things to his owne benefit;
False of his faith, yet prodigall in word,
Darke in his talke, yet seldome would afford
Poore Suitors hearing; but vnlesse they came
With golden warrants signed for the same:
Yet if that Suitors meanes for suites would vse,
Whom better, then Sir *Ape*, could any chuse;
For many a Canker-worme of common state
Some farming Huckster, or Sea runagate,

The Beggers Ape.

T'increase their private good by publique ill,
Might through his helpe with ease obtaine their will.
Thus the slye *Ape* with naturall wit endow'd,
Grew great in wealth, by wealth grew wondrous proud.
"For costly wealth euen to the basest wight
"Giues golden wings to soare a lofty flight.

Now while the *Ape* did study more and more
By daily begging to increase his store,
The *Fox* that idle was, but by his wit
For the *Apes* turne still layd foundation fit,
And on a time I weene, aboue the rest,
To th' *Ape* hee commeth with a merry Iest:
(*Sir Ape*) quoth hee, if you my friend will stand,
Wee will not want t'haue gold at our command;
For I in Court haue found a gallant gull
Whom of his gold, (of which hee yet is full)
We well may fleece, if you will lend your ayde
To which in hast, the *Ape* this answer made.

Say in good sooth, *Sir Reynald*, I you pray,
In what my word and deed you helpen may
And of what *Mister* wight make you report
I know him not? spends he his dayes in Court?

Yes, quoth the *Fox*, to Court he came of late
And well I wot hee is a lolly mate;
It is to wit, the *Ass*, whose aged syre
Did toyle himselte and drudge for daily hyre
And lest his thrifty gaine vnto his sonne
To gentelize it here when he was gone.

Sayd then the *Ape*, foule shame such fooles betide
That to maintayne their sonnes vnthrifty pride
Will bow their labouring backes and take no pleasure
For all their paines vpon their hardrackt treasure.

The *Fox* reply'd, you seeme to bee a Foe
To gentle kinde; for if it were not so,
How should the Forrest in a moment space,
Breed so much gentle-blood of meaner race,
And sooth to say, this *Ass* though meanely borne
Yet through much wealth, made wondrous full of scorn.

The Beggars Ape.

An humour strange in his conceit doth feed
That by descent hee comes of Noble breed.
It was my chance the other day to be
With th'horned *Goate*, and him in company,
Who both were clad in goodly rich array :
But in attire, the *Affe* was farre more gay.
His head with plume of Feathers was bedight,
His trappings all with Bells and Bosses bright
Was richly furnished, which with more pride
Hung downe vnto the ground on eyther side.
These lustie Gallants to increase their fame,
In their conceits at Knighthood both doth ayme.
Which if for them wee can by friends obtayne,
Wee shall not fayle for meed t'haue double gayne ;
For the *Affe* so vaine appears ; that he will giue
His whole estate, ere he vnknighthed liue.
And for the *Goate*, we shall haue golden fee
Of Female kind, that they may Ladyed bee.
Being dub'd by him ; Say then (*Sir Ape*) I pray
Good gaine is oft times lost by long delay.

Sir Reynald, said the *Ape*, my forward mind
Brookes no delay, where I a meane may find
To worke my will : but know that your intent
Makes me much doubt, the sequell of th'euent :
For this high Order is to those assign'd,
That famous be for vertue of the mind,
Or for some high atchiuement ; for their meed
Haue purchas'd it, to glorifie their deed.
How may we then bring such a thing to passe,
As purchase Knighthood for the golden *Affe*.

Tush, quoth the *Fox*, the world now doth not see
The thing that is, but that which seemes to bee.
And hee whose tongue the tayle of Greatnesse lickes
If he will thrive, his Conscience neuer stickes
To ouergild, and lift vp to the skies
With deepest oathes, inuentions blackest lyes ;
And that we may our purpose bring to passe,
We must obscure the folly of the *Affe*.

The Beggars Ape.

The vertues rare that beautifie his mind,
Wee must applaud, thereby the world to blind ;
And say and sweare, that hee amongst the best
Of all the Forrest is the hopeful'st beast ;
So to the world they both shall seeme to bee
For vertues sake, much worthy this degree.

Now certes, said the *Ape*, this is good leasing
And to the *Lyon* it will sure bee pleasing :
When in the Forrest hee shall heare the same,
Which in their high applause wee can proclaime.
Meane time, Sir *Reynald*, backe returne with speed
Vnto them both, and tell them 'tis decreed,
That worthy they shall weare the golden Spurre
Like two true sonnes of *Mars*, and ne're incurre
The hazard of the Field, but onely this,
To haue our fee before, we may not misse.

Tush, quoth the *Fox*, bee confident in mee,
A foole hee is that will behind hand bee :
If that our purpose haue but good euent
The gaine is ours, neere thinke your paines mispent.
This said, themselues they both began t'apply
T'effect their purpose, all their friends they try ;
And such applauses daily they impute
To the *Asse* and *Goat*, for whom they make this suite
That in the end both twaine in pompe and pride
Were dubd Knights errand, of the Forrest wide
Of whom in guerdon of their mickle paines
The begging *Ape* and *Fox* had golden gaines,
So both thinke well themselues apayd to bee
They with their Knight hood, th'other with their Fee.
But let not such base Lossels that account
All merit vayne, and onely hope to mount
Themselues with golden wings to such degree
That seeke to purchase it with baser Fee ;
And thinke a siluer silken vestiment
A gilded Spurre, or strange acoutrement
The fruits of brainsicke fancies fond delight
The onely meanes to make a perfect Knight.

The Beggars Ape.

Let not such dunghil brood of Kestrell kinde
That vnto honour neuer cast their minde
Dismay the noble spirit that assayes
Through deeds of Armes his name on high to raise;
For bare degrees that want true vertues merit
Shall in fames golden booke no place inherit.
When Honour, Meede, and noble vertues praise
In Swan-white age findes fresh and youthfull dayes ;
Then let not fond Sir *Asse*, disgracefull seeme
To those that for their worth and high esteeme
In vertues bare regard exalted bee
By Princes grace to place of such degree ;
Let boasting *Bragadochioes* of our time
And golden-handed Churles, that seeke to clime
To places of such high credit, inly burne
And with the vaine Sir *Asse*, the Begger spurne;
So shall the *Ape* their follies still deride
And fleece their store for their aspiring pride.
Who tasting once the sweet delights that came
By this his Begging trade, himselfe did frame
With golden fees of dayly Begging base,
Shamelight on gaine got with so foule disgrace ;
Yet shamelette hee continued begging still
To glut the gulf of his vn satiate will.
Which many noble beasts did soone espie
On whome the *Lions* safetie did relye,
To whose great wisdom and fore-casting cares
Committed were the Forrests cheife Affaires.
But 'mongst them all, that most illustrate beast
That worthy Counsellor from heau'n yblest,
The noble *Elephant* tooke speciall heed
That out of Court such Beggars he might weed.
And sooth to say, as *Greekes* doe well recite
With crooked Trumpet he could truely write,
And by the working of his prudent mind
Could oft obscure the wits of humaine kind ;
For on his care the Kingdomes happines
Did most depend, and for her worthines

The Beggars Ape.

To him committed was in custodie
The keeping of the common Treasurie.
This worthy Peere, who dayly did behold
The shamelesse begging of these Beggers bold
In wisdome diuers wayes did cast about
To finde the wily *Apes* foule knauery out.
But th' *Ape* so well him bore that long it was
E're th' *Elephant* could bring his will to passe ;
Meane time like as the *Leach* vpon the store
From greedy sucking ne're desists, before
The place be bloodlesse left exhausted dry
So did th' *Ape* to th' *Asse* himselfe apply.

For when the doultysh beast ycleped was
Through all the Court (by name of hight Sir *Asse*)
Pustt vppe with pride, he thought himselfe to bee
The fairest beast that euer eye did see,
Hee learned had to prauce with stately pace
To rayne his *Asses* head with lofty grace
And in each point himselfe so high to beare
As if that hee some noble *Palfray* were ;
Which pride of his, was laughed so to scorne
Of euery beast that knew him to bee borne
Of base descent. yet hee through want of wit
Swolne proud by wealth, such folly did commit,
That he their common Gull accounted was
And bore the title of the *golden Asse*.

Which th' *Ape* did well perceiue, & with vaine shewes
Of fained friendship gan with him to glose,
With soothing tongue his folly he did feed
And gaue him counsell by some glorious deed
To amplify his name in euery place,
Hee knew he was not come of *Asses* race ;
But rather sprung of some such noble breed
As swift wing'd *Pegasus* that heau'nly Steed.
Hee wisht him therefore in a single race
To challenge th' *Horse*, thereby to get him grace
Ne did he doubt but he should win the day
If hee with courage bold but gaue th' *Assay*.

The Beggars Ape.

Sir *Affe*, with selfe conceit being mou'd in minde
To heare his praise, forgot himselfe by kinde
T'haue bin an *Affe*, and in this humour sent
A challenge to the *Horse* with this intent,
To runne with him before the Forrest King
In hope himselfe in fauour for to bring.
The day was set and chosen was the place
Vpon the open Plaine to runne this race;
Where the dread King of beaſts ſtood to behold
The ſtout Sir *Affe*, performe his challenge bold;
The time being come forth came the iuſtice *Horse*
With comely grace to runne th'expected courſe,
Who by his ſtately geſture gan to ſhow
Stout ſignes in proud contempt of his baſe foe.
His creſted necke hee often bow'd to ground
With foaming mouth as if he would confound
The earth at once, and from his noſthrills came
A fierie breath as from a furnace flame;
His pricking Eares ſtood ſtartling on his head
And of a common cuſtome inlye bred,
In iollity of pride which did abound,
His hollow hooſe ſtill played vpon the ground;
At laſt from his ſtrong necke in neighing ſhrill
With ſound thereof the Forrest hee did fill,
Seeming thereby to call vpon Sir *Affe*,
That in this challenge the appellat was.
Who vainely vaunting with a gallant trayne
Came proudly praucing on the ample Plaine;
Where when hee came beholding well the *Horse*
His comely grace, braue ſhape, and wondrous force:
Halfe in deſpaire hee did himſelfe repent
Of his proud challenge and bold hardiment.
Yet with the vayne applauſe of flattering mates
Being proudly prickt, with Courage bold he waites,
The time appointed to begin the race
Before the Forrest King being then in place;
The ſigne once giuen, Sir *Affe*, began to runne
With greedy hope great fame thereby t'haue wonne.

The Beggars Ape.

But the braue *Horse* in pace away did goe
Like winged shaft shot from a Tuscan bowe,
O like a Swallow in the welkin bright
That sheeres the subtle ayre with nimble flight,
Leauing the sluggish *Asse* with shame behind
To know himselfe to be an *Asse* by kind.
With mickle laughter bred in every place
Amongst the beasts that stood to see the race,
Which the *Ape* did well obserue with slye intent
As he that knew, what would be the euent;
For when the *Asse*, amongst the better sort
Was held in base contempt throughout the Court,
And left forlorne for his stupidity
The *Ape* alone, did keepe him company.
Whose doltish nature by his cunning wit
In all his actions done he did so fit,
That in the end by craft and couensing flye
Hee gull'd the simple beast and suckt him dry.
Who left forlorne returned all a mort
Vnto his Country home, from *Princes* Court.
There helpelesse to bewaile in wofull wise
His lauish will and wanton riotize;
O wretched end of idle vanity,
Of misexpence and *Prodigality*.
You younger wits that spend your golden houres,
Your selues and substance in great *Princes* bowers;
That quaffe downe Court delights, and dayly swill
The seeming sugred *Nectar* of your ill;
That weare your large left patrimonies bare
In Drinke, in Dice, Dauncing and dainty fare.
That vp and downe in Antick shapés doe jet,
And on your golden backs doe beare your debt,
And with a vaine bewitching hope struck blind
Of idle fame doe watch to catch the wind,
Yet thinke your selues all others to su-passe
In reaching wit. Behold this forlorne *Ass*,
Who'mongst the best, once iolly blithe and trim
In deepest waues of sweet delight did swim;

Now

The Beggars Ape.

Now of his golden good he being bereft
And driven home, when scarce no home was left :
In stead of stately bower, where he had bin
An homely Cottage gladly enters in,
Where with sad sighes his wretched eyes doe fill
In stead of *Arras* and sweet paintings skill,
Vpon the broken rooſe and ſlender walls
Sticks ſmoakie black and Spiders duſty coales,
In stead of ſweet perfumes, the bitter ſmoake
With foggy clouds his tender ſight doth choake,
In stead of Siluer plate, or pureſt Glaſſe
Hee with the Beggars diſh now pleaſed was,
In which for Wine to glad his wofull hart
Hee takes cold Whey and water in good part,
His Courtly dyet fraught with many a diſh
Of diuers kindes of dainty Fleſh and Fiſh,
Is now become the almes of ſome good houſe
Or homely morſell of ſome hungry Mouſe.
The ground his board, greene graſſe his Carpet makes
And for his Bed a pad of Straw he takes
In which diſtreſſe, by his owne folly bred
Hee weeps, he ſighes, and ſhakes his wofull head ;
Blaming his bitter Fate, but all in vaine
Since of his wealthy ſtore naught doth remaine.
Meane time the *Ape* that liu'd vpon his loſſe
Seeing the wretched fortune of the *Aſſe*,
Did laugh to ſcorne his wofull miſery
And pitch'd his nets with fraud and ſubtilty ;
To circumvent the weake and ſimple ſort
That vſed to frequent the *Princes* Court.
But thus while th' *Ape* ſuch things to paſſe did bring
About the pallace of the Forreſt King
The greedy *Wolfe* his part did alſo play
In woods abroad t' obtaine his wiſhed pray,
Who was a bloody beaſt of wicked brood
And ſought to liue by ſpoyle of others good.
Yet had hee large poſſiſſions of his owne,
And in the woods was mighty wealthy growne,

The Beggars Ape.

Whereby he daily sought in Cruell wise
Vpon the poorer Beasts to Tyrannize,
The Woods in Common, and th'adioyning Plaine
Hee did conuert vnto his priuate gaine ;
And meaner beasts that nigh his Den did dwell,
Hee from their owne abodes did oft expell.
'Mongst whom the *Urchin* and the *Squirrill* hight,
By the *Apes* helpe, he robbed of their right :
For in close thicket farre from sight of Sunne
Where in his darksome Den the *Wolfe* did wonne,
The industrious *Urchin* in his little Cell,
Not farre from thence alone did chance to dwell.
At whose good hap the *Wolfe* did much repine
And daily did behold with enuious eyne,
How he in sharpest Winter did enioy
The fruites of Sommers toyle without annoy ;
For when *Pomona* did in winters scorne
The Woods greene heads with golden fruit adorne,
When fields doe seem to laugh, when flowers doe spring
When Beasts doe play, and Birds doe sweetly sing ;
Then would the *Urchin* watch with curious eye,
When *Boreas* blasts did cusse the Clouds in skye
And shake the Tree when like thicke showers of raine
The Fruit would fall, the which with mickle paine
Vpon his bristled backe, the *Urchin* bore
Home to his Cell to make his winters store,
Whereby from winters thrall hee liu'd secure,
When other Beasts much sorrow did endure.
Now at the entry of the sterne *Wolfes* denne
The place of his abode had long time bin ;
That gainst the State nought could be done or sayd,
But by the *Urchin* it might bee bewrayed.
The *Wolfe* likewise out of his greedy moode
Did seeke t'inlarge the place of his abode,
By proud inroaching of that little Cell
In which his neighbour, th'*Urchin* vs'd to dwell ;
Wherefore hee fought by death or some disgrace,
To dispossesse the *Urchin* of that place.

And

The Beggars Ape.

And on a time from home as th'*Urchin* went
Abroad into the Forrest with intent
As was his wont, to get such labours meed,
As Fortune in the Forrest had decreed.
Loe in the way the rauening *Wolfe* did watch
This silly beast within his pawes to catch,
Whom he did often thinke to make his prey,
Yet durst hee not at that time giue th'*Affay*;
So well the *Urchin* did his body arme
With coate of prooffe, 'gainst all intended harme.
The *Wolfe* therefore perceiuing force to faile
Did seeke by flattering falshood to preuaile.
For in the way finding occasion meet
With fawning words, thus th'*Urchin* hee did greet.

Now neighbour, quoth the *Wolfe*, you be well met
Vpon what high atchieuement be you set,
That you thus armed bee, seemes you doe stand
In dangers doubt, and feare some harme at hand.

Nay certes, quoth the *Urchin*, nought I feare
Of harme t'ensue, this armed coate I weare
For no such cause; but that with paine I may
Vpon my bristled hide, such fruit conuay
To my poore home, which in the woods I find,
Least with the sluggard vnto ease inclin'd,
On Summers pleasure I doe fondly feed,
And want in Winter to sustaine my need.

The *Wolfe* replyed, y blessed be thy paine
And labour, that deserues to reape good gaine;
Yet let me now disswade thee to disarm
Thy selfe this once, and feare no future harme,
This day desist from toyle and goe with mee
Vnto our friend, where wee will welcome bee;
For to all Beasts, this day is by the *Bore*
Kept festiuall, where we shall finde good store
Of diuers dainty Fruits, of which at will
Withouten labour thou mayest haue thy fill.
This sayd, he vsed such kinde courtesie
Mix'd with such friendly Importunitie;

That

The Beggars Ape.

That the poore *Vrchin*, thought his meaning good
And would with him vnto the neighbouring Wood,
Whereas the *Bore* should wonne; but loe at need
A friend was by, to helpe him at that need.
And sure the silly *Vrchin* that same day
Vnto the Rauening *Wolfe* had beene a prey,
But that the *Squirrill* from the leaue Tree,
Vnscene to them the *Wolfs* intent did see;
Who to the *Vrchin*, call'd with loude exclaime;
Fond foole said hee, what madnes is this same?
How darest thou credit that same cruell Beast,
That on thy Carkasse seekes to make his Feast.
Take heed, by his seduccments bee not led,
If thou disarme thy selfe thou art but dead.
For hence I did behold how in the way
In secret couert hid, hee lurking lay,
And hadst thou not with stiffe. quill'd pointed hide
Beene arm'd about; by him thou sure hadst dy'd.

The *Vrchin* hearing this, vpon his chin
Did set his feet and drew his bristled skin
About his body round, as any ball
To shield himselfe, and shun his fatall fall.

Which when the *Wolfe* perceiu'd, hee went his way
Inrag'd in minde, and vow'd without delay
To act a swift reuenge vpon them both,
And for his cause, vnto the *Ape* he goeth;
To whom, Complaint against them he doth bring
To be preferr'd vnto the Forrests King.
Hee told, how th' *Vrchin* like a theeuish wight
Did steale abroad in dead of darksome night,
Vsing to sucke the full-fed *Kine* vnkept,
While the poore Neat heard all securely slept:
And how the *Squirrill* to augment his store,
Did rob the Forrest of the Fruit it bore;
And to his will, that he might better shape
The greedy fancy of the Begging *Ape*,
Hee wish'd him begge the forfeit of their Goods,
Since none amongst the Beasts about the woods

There

The Beggars Ape.

There was, with whom such treasure could be found
As with them twaine which chiefly did abound
With Nuts, and Aples, which the *Wolfe* could tell
Aboue all things, the *Ape* lou'd wondrous well.
And sooth to say these tidings did so please
Th' *Apes* greedy humor, that with little ease
The *Wolfe* obtain'd his wish for in small space
The *Urchin* and the *Squirrell* wanting grace
Offriends to backe their cause were from those Woods
Exil'd for aye, and forfeited there goods ;
Whereby the *Wolfe* possession did obtaine
Of th' *Urchins* little Cell, and th' *Ape* did gaine
By begging Nuts and Aples which of yore
By others paines were hoarded vp in store.
Thus dayly did the subtile *Ape* obtaine
Pleasure and profit both withouten paine,
By which I weene compar'd to all the rest
“ Amongst all Craftsmen Beggers are the best :
For eu'n the proud'st that thinkes paines taking's base.
To turne oft Begger thinkes it no disgrace.
But whilest the *Ape* lull'd in security
Did swim in pleasures and felicity
Not wanting ought, for seldome did he craue
The giift of ought but he the same might haue,
The noble *Elephant* that in the Court
Did beare chiefe sway amongst the supream sort
Like a true Statesman, for the Forreist good
Against the *Apes* incessant begging stood.
Whereby the *Ape* did stoope his gallant minde
For though by information he might finde
Ought worthy begging, yet the *Princes* grant
Hee did not craue ; because by th' *Elephant*
Oft to reuoke his grant the King was mou'd
If to the state it preiudiciall stood ;
Therefore the *Ape* that liu'd before secure
And thought his golden begging would endure
For euer certaine : with a heauy cheere
Now hung the head ; for well it did appeare

The Beggars Ape.

Hee might goe swinke and sweat to get his liuing
Since that the Forrest Prince did cease from giuing,
Sir *Reynald* likewise that same crafty mate
That did in the *Apes* beg'd guifts participate
Now wanted meanes, whereby he might support
His brauery 'mongst the gallants of the Court
For long he watched had, and cast about
By his fine wit to finde some purchase out
Some ancient Ruine of Antiquitie
Orought that might be tearm'd invtilie,
But naught he found that in the Forrest stood
That was invtilie for common good,
Which when he did perceiue : halfe in despaire
Vnto the *Ape* his friend he made repaire
Who to each other often though in vaine
Their sad mishap in secret did complaine.
Yet in the end the *Fox* did finde a fetch
“ For dire constraint, the wit at large doth stretch,
Hee well remembred that if any beast
Were found offensive to the Kings behest
Or did infringe the Law through all the Woods
By penall statutes lost both Lands and goods,
The which without controule, as lawfull gaine
Th' *Ape* for a boone by begging might obtaine,
This once being thought vpon the wily *Ape*
As carefull of their good this speech shape.
Sir *Reynald* (said the *Ape*) wee be in cale
To be vndone vnlesse by *Ioues* good grace
Against the storme, in time we doe prouide
“ Time runnes away and no man stayer the tide,
You see that wee be needy and in lacke
And in the Court, the eyes of every lacke
Are fix'd vpon vs, and these garments old
Cannot in Court our countenance long vphold.
Then say (Sir *Reynald*) as yee be right wise
What hopefull course for vs can you deuise
Wee must prouide for helpe without delay
Or hopelesse leaue the Court and runne away.

The Beggars Ape.

The *Fox* reply'd full little did I weene
That in this case so witlesse you had beene
So long as hope remains; why should wee doubt
Haue wee not working wit to cast about,
Then haue good hope, for wee in little space
Will worke our selues againe in Fortunes grace,
We know right well the *Oxe* and silly *Sheepe*
Though they themselues from Court in priuate keepe
As being but rusticke Chuffes of base account
Yet they in wealthy substance farre surmount
Whom if by subtilty we can but draw
Within the compasse of the Princes law
To stop our mouthes we shall haue golden fee
So much they feare in danger for to bee.
And if this faile; yet we vpon our oath
As loyall subiects can appeach them both
For speeches spoken 'gainst the Gouvernment
Or other trespasse, which we can inuent,
Which that wee may to better purpose bring
We can disguis'd, talke of the Forrest King
And aske what tydings in the Princes Court
What vice in common they doe most support
And in their speech if we them tripping take
V Vee by addition can the matter make
To seeme farre worse; by which if they i'th' end
Conuicted bee; then that which we intend
V Vee haue obtayn'd; for we their goods haue wonne
In recompence of our good seruice done.
This said, the *Ape* approouing *Reynald* wit
In that hee at a pinch, could helpe with it
V Vith speed in some strange habit, both disguis'd
V Would put in practise what hee had deuiz'd,
They both agreed themselues forthwith to clad
Like stranger Countrymen of late decayed;
V Whose habit and demeanor had you seene
You would haue thought the wretched *Ape* t' haue been
Some sturdie Clowne that late had left the Carre
And in this strange disguise had come from farre,

The Beggars Ape.

Hee was y clad all in a Russet gray
Of coursest stufte, yet with such meane aray,
Hee seemed well appay'd as did appeare
Being well contented with his Countrey weare,
His russet lerkin, many yeares y worne
Was waxen bare, and at the elboes torne :
His Breeches of the same made scanty wife
So close did sit vnto his brawny thighes,
That his fat flankes that plumpe and jolly were,
Like two round Balls did through the same appeare ;
Thereto, his blew round Cap him well became
With a plume Feather pendant on the same,
Which o'th'one side of his head he euer wore
As if in minde some high conceit hee bore.
A rusty Sword hee carryed by his side
And at his backe a Dagger welltyde,
For many hackes therein made long agoe
Sufficient proofes did of the mettall show,
His woollen Hose were of the purest white
Of thicke strong knit, and yet in open sight
Were broken 'boue the heeles, and both his Shooes
Worne with long trauell out about the toes.
And thus he trauayl'd with his fellow *Foxe*
About the Forrest for to finde the *Oxe*,
And silly *Sheepe*, whom the *Ape* had first espide
In Field farre off, fast by the Riuer side,
And said vnto the *Foxe* ; Behold I see
In yon same field, where they both grasing bee :
Now proue your wit Sir *Reynald*, if you can,
Begin you first, you are the grauer man.
This sayd, they came where th'*Oxe* and *Sheepe* did grase,
Whom thus the *Foxe* did greet with fawning phrase ?
All haile (Sir *Oxe*) said hee, full glad am I
To see you beare your lofty head so high,
It seemes to vs by this your goodly port
You are in fauour in the *Princes* Court,
You can informe vs of some tidings there
And 'bout the *Lyon*, who chiefe place doth beare.

“ The

The Beggars Ape.

“ The *Oxe* reply’d, (good Sir) you deeme amisse
“ For your coniecture goes astray in this,
“ Seeing Courtly fauour is no cause that I
“ Seeme thus to beare my branched head so hie,
“ But humble thoughts, which wounded harts doe heale
“ In sweet content, is cause of all weale,
“ Pale enuy payson to the Statesmans good
“ Nere gnawes my heart ne suckes my vitall blood,
“ Nor greedy Anarice of others shares
“ Disturbs my sweet content with boundlesse cares;
“ These pastures bounds my thoughts doe euer bound,
“ Ne doe I ioy to feed in stranger ground,
“ But with my Fate suffic’d I still abide
“ Not fearing any ill that may betide,
“ Of Mulickes rarest skill I take no keepe
“ At any time to summon timely sleepe,
“ But sweet voyc’d Birds, and milde Streames gently
“ My weary limbes, in restfull quiet Hushes. (gushes
“ The often horrid sounds of Court Alarmes
“ Ne’re startle me from sleepe for feare of harmes,
“ But sleeping till the morne secure of feares,
“ The Birds sing sweet *Bon-jours* about mine cares :
“ Thus liue I happy in content of minde,
“ Which wee in Courtly greatnesse seldome finde.

Certes, said the *Ape*, it seemes yee be right wise
That can of worldly weale so well aduise,
And yet in this me seemes you haue digrest,
For ’mongst the best you being a goodly beast
To great aduancement, may your selfe soone bring
And authorize high Seruice for the King.

“ Alas, (quoth th’*Oxe*) How vulgar is affection
“ In vainely seeking after fond promotion,
“ As well th’ignoble as the Noble blood
“ Deeme vading pompe the happie mans chiefe good.
“ Yet view the Court and marke the misery
“ Of those that swim in Court felicitie,
“ Whose wretched steps in Princes Courts attends
“ His slauiish will on others wills depends,

The Beggars Ape.

" His turn-coat thoughts more light then lightest feather
" Turn'd with the winde and return'd with the weather
" Eu'n as his Masters changing humour is,
" Must turne and Change to like of that or this
" Against his Conscience praise impietie,
" And sooth foule sinne with fawning flatterie,
" And yet suppose thou shouldst exalted bee
" To some place past Court-crouching with the knee,
" And by the helpe of Greatnesse finde such grace
" As neere the steps of Maiestie t'haue place,
" Yet marke (fond foole) and see what vnseene woe
" Would follow thee though thou in Gold shouldst goe,
" To bee a Partner in the Priuitie
" And close concealement of Authoritie,
" Though to thy second selfe thou shew the same
" Oft winnes thee Death, and neuer dying shame ;
" Yet in thy Conscience to conceale such things
" V When life is gone, Death worse then death it brings.
" Oh then how blest and happy a wight is hee
" That liues from Court though nere so base he bee.
 T'enlarge this Theame the *Sheepe* did silence breake,
" Deare neighbor *Oxe* (quoth he) the truth you speake,
" Yet more then this, doe many vndergoe
" That in the Court doe make a goodly show,
" For many there that beare so bold a face
" And deeme all vulgars beggerly and base,
" That strut on Tiptoe, and with Elboe pride
" Aspire to reach the square from side to side,
" Oft stoope their gallant mindes and proue I weene,
" V Worse Beggars farre then those that Beggers beene ;
" V With fawning tongue and Court eclipsing guile
" They claw the Great in vices more then vile,
" And then of this or that in daily begging,
" They still sollicite them with tedious gaping.
" But loe alas, what proues this hardracket store
" Got by eucroaching on the pined poore,
" Lifes bitter curse, while heere on Earth wee dwell
" And Soules sad burthen bearing downe to Hell.

“ V Why

The Beggars Ape:

“ Why then doe those that tediously importune
“ The royall *Lyon* to aduance their Fortune,
“ Thus base and Begger-like sollicite still
“ T’increase their profit by a generall ill:
“ They knew the noble *Lions* Royall minde
“ To humble Suitors is by nature kinde,
“ Nor stearne nor statefull to the Subiects base,
“ But full of Lenitie and Gentle grace,
“ They know hee striues by his benignitie
“ To imitate the Gods in Charitie,
“ Which they will still abuse, being Begger-lipt,
“ Till from his Court such Beggers base be whipt.
This speech so toucht the *Ape*, that with much paine
Hee could himselfe in quiet moode containe.

But *Reynald* thus reply’d. “ Well haue you spoken
“ In this behalfe, for these your words betoken
“ Your common care, which nature tyes vs to,
“ Not for our selues being onely borne to doe.
“ Yet you (me seemes Sir *Oxe*) without such shift
“ By merit may your selfe to honour lift,
“ Seeing euery where true mérit hath her place
“ At least it can no where receiue disgrace

The *Oxe* reply’d. “ I would thy words were true
“ Would merit euery where might haue her due,
“ Then should I not behold vnto my griere
“ The meritorious want without reliefe.
“ But loe, Ah lasse, behold the noble *Horse*
“ That eu’n hath spent the vtmost of his force,
“ ‘Gainst th’*Agle* and the *Dragon* his proud mate
“ Who both of late made warre vpon our State,
“ How oft haue I beheld him with delight
“ Preparing of himselfe for bloody fight,
“ Who neuer fear’d what might by foes bee done
“ With Ha, ha, ha, the Buttaile hath begun,
“ The eyes of *Gorgon* burning in his head
“ With feare hath made his fainting toes halfe dead.
“ And proudly prauncing with a side-long pace
“ Lifting his fetlockes vp with nimble grace,

“ All

The Beggars Ape.

“ All Rainbow-like hee bore his crest deckt necke
“ In proud contempt of any Countershecke,
“ Then on the hard ground hauing made some prooffe
“ Of the strong batter y of his hardy hooffe,
“ With nimble Capers in a stately daunce
“ He towards the battaile bold would proudly prounce,
“ And being come in sight of th’ Armed foes
“ Hee snuffes, he puffes, he Boggles, snoarts and blowes,
“ And neighing with shrill voyce, hee seemes to cry
“ And call for Combate with the Enemy.
“ Then like the Lightning from the Easterne ayre
“ Or swiftest whirlwind, in his fierce repayre
“ To flie’ mongst thickest troupes he hath bin seene
“ To lose his life, or worthy Conquest winne,
“ VWhere in a moment, from the dusty ground
“ Into the ayre hee vp would lightly bound,
“ And falling downe againe, with sinewie shankes
“ VWould beat and batter downe the thickest rankes,
“ From whence he oftentimes (though wounded) came
“ VWith Conquests high renowe, and endlesse fame.
“ But now where is the meed of his true merit ?
“ VWho now yeelds comfort to his fainting spirit ?
“ Liue not the sonnes of *Mars* in euery eye
“ The perfect maps of Ragged beggery,
“ As often as their wounds they doe behold
“ The which they tooke their Countries cause t’ vphold,
“ Their eyes, lippes, hands, and harts, to heau’n doe goe,
“ VVishing pale Death to end their helpless woe ;
“ VWhich being deny’d dire need doth them constrain
“ To doe the thing their soules did once disdain,
“ Eu’n Begger-like one single Mite to craue
“ Poore life within his halfe-staru’d house, to saue.
This said, the *Foxe* forthwith with winking eyne
To th’ *Ape* as was decreed gaue priuie signe.

Who stepping forth with countenance fell, thus spake
“ Friend *Foxe* quoth hee, your witnesse heere I take
“ Of their disloyall words, which intimate
“ Their treacherous thoughts against the Prince & State.
“ Sure

The Beggars Ape.

“ Sure sayd the *Fox*, their speeches doe import
“ As much as Treason, if ’twere heard in Court,
“ But they perchance will happily repent
“ Let me diswade you then from your intent,
“ For if the Councell of the *Lyon* dread
“ Bee certified of this, they are but dead.
“ They shall compound with you, and ’twere not good
“ For you to seeke the shedding of their blood.
With this intent the *Fox* thus spake, as hee
That thought thereby to gaine some golden fee
To stop their mouths, but both the *Sheepe* and *Oxe*,
Perceiuing well the knauery of the *Foxe*,
As they that guiltlesse were, withouten doubt
Defied both *Fox* and *Ape* with courage stout.

The *Ape* perceiuing this swore by his head
For those their words, they should ere long be dead.
And so enrag’d to Court he went againe
With *Reynald* his slye coesmate to complaine.
Where when they came, such Treason they detect
Which ’gainst the *Oxe* and *Sheepe* they did object,
That with swift summoning they cyted were
Before the *Lyons* Councell to appeare.
The time was set, and loe those Royall Peeres
That on their backes the Forrests burthen beares
four-like in Councell, each one tooke his place
To giue their judgement in so weightie a case.
The Guard attendant on the Forrest King
The *Oxe* and *Sheepe*, vnto the Barre did bring;
Then with shrill voyce, the Cryer ’mongst them all
A generall silence through the Court did call,
Which euery where aduisefull audience bred
While thus th’Inditement by the Clerke was read.

“ Come forth Sir *Oxe* (sayd hee) stand at the Barre,
“ And thou Sir *Sheepe*, yee both Indited are
“ For Treason, ’gainst the *Lyon* our dread King
“ Which th’*Ape* and *Foxe* of late to light did bring,
“ And for lewd Speech vs’d ’mongst the vulgar sort
“ Seeking thereby for to defame the Court;

The Beggars Ape.

“ Intitling those by names of Beggars base,
“ That for desert are in the Princes grace :
“ And which is worse for your disloyal hate
“ And treasonable grudging ’gainst the state
“ Of all which treasons worthy vengefull wreake
“ If you be guilty or not guilty speake ?
“ To this, the *Oxe* not guilty did reply
“ And therewithall he craued liberty
“ With humble suite that he might answer shape
“ Gainst this Inditement of the *Fox* and *Ape*,
“ Which granted after humble reuerence made
“ Vnto the bench, these words he boldly sayd.
“ Right honored Lords, Peeres of a peerelesse King
“ From whose sole care our common good doth spring,
“ The greatest part of treason vrged heere
“ As by the inditement read may well appeare
“ Consists in words which as our foes report
“ By vs were spoken ’gainst the King and Court :
“ But daigne dread Lords, to marke what we haue sayd
“ And what construction thereof they haue made;
“ Naught ’gainst the Court or Courtier did wee say
“ But ’gainst such Vice as in the Court beares sway.
“ The Court where wonnes so many a Iouiall spring
“ Made famous by the influence of a noble King,
“ As like *Jones* Pallace ’boue the starry skye,
“ Rather to bee admir’d, then judg’d with mortall eye ;
“ Yet as in a Paradise of sweet delight
“ With rarest Fruits and fairest Flowers bedight,
“ Ne’ rethelisse the care the cunning Gardener takes
“ His hookes, his sythes, his pickaxe, spade and rakes,
“ Some fruitlesse weeds are growing on the ground :
“ So in our Kings owne Pallace may bee found
“ Amongst the number that praise-worthy bee
“ Some wicked Beasts of more then base degree.
“ And gainst such Vice, as they doe there support
“ Wee did inueigh ; and not against the Court :
“ Ne did we say, that such haue Beggars bin
“ That by desert doe Grace or fauour winne :

“ But

The Beggars Ape.

“ But such as dayly vse with restlesse gaping
“ With cloaked falsehood and with tedious begging
“ Of our dread Soueraignes golden gifts to craue
“ Although no merit in themselues they haue ;
“ This is the summe in brieft of what we spake
“ And this is it which they would treason make,
This said, dumbe silence for a certaine space
Did shut the lips of all that were in place
Till at the last, that great *Heroe* rose
Who of the Forrests treasure doth dispose
The noble *Elephant*, who as he stood
From his sweet mouth powr’d forth a fluent flood
Of honied eloquence, which wanting skill
If I expresse the same, soone should I spill
With sharpe inuestiue, first against that sort
Of hungry Beggars that frequent the Court
Hee did inueigh, then by his powerfull wit
Hee shewed since he in Counsels seat did sit ;
How many priuate States had changed bin
Which by obseruance he had mark’t and seene,
Supplanted all by couenage of the *Ape*
Or by some falsehood which the *Fox* did shape.
Then ’gainst the *Ape*, his speech he gan to frame
Hee shew’d what Beast he was and whence he came
How *Joue* at first, for his deceiptfull guile
Made him, of man a Beast, and in that Isle
Call’d *Ape* Isle of his name, alone him put
And how his raile at length for craft was cut.
Then question’d he the *Fox*, to know if hee
Against the *Oxe* and *Sheepe* would witnes bee
And what true depositions he could bring
That they intended treason ’gainst the King.
The *Fox* though halfe amaz’d with suddaine feare
To heare such words from such a mighty Peere,
Yet that his witnes might seeme more t’hane troth
Hee did vnbidden seeke to take his oath.
The booke was brought ; but loe the Eternall *Joue*
Who by his power protecteth from aboute

The Beggars Ape.

The cause of Innocence, with dreadfull frowne
From Heau'ns high Pallace cast his count'nance downe.
And as the *Foxe* his oath began to take
As *Ioue* but stirr'd, hee made *Olympus* shake,
And thundring horribly about the skie,
Through the ayre hee made a sulphurie flash to flie,
Which fell vpon the *Foxe*, for his foule sinne;
And for his judgement strange, so syng'd his skinne
That since, All *Foxes* smell of it and beare
A synged colour euer in their haire.
This suddaine change, amaz'd the standers by
Whoall with one consent, gan glorifie
The name of *Ioue*, and 's judgement forthwith gaue
Against the *Ape*, who now no wit could saue
From punishment; For 'bout the Forrest wide
They whipt him well, and soundly lasht his hide.

*So did the Begger bluntly end his Tale,
In Which (your pardon I craue) if ought I faile.
And if in reading, Beggerly you hold it,
Dislike it not, because a Begger told it.*

FINIS.

THE BEGGERS APE

BY

Richard Niccols

With a Postscript

by

BRICE HARRIS

NEW YORK

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THE BEGGERS APE

Richard Niccols, author of THE BEGGERS APE and one of the most "ingenious persons" at Oxford, continued after his graduation in May 1606 to study and imitate Spenser's poetry. In 1607 he published THE CUCKOW, reminiscent of THE FAERIE QUEEN, with a conventional title-page, dedication, and preface. In the Induction to A WINTER NIGHT'S VISION. 1610 (ll. 5,6), he announced himself author of THE BEGGERS APE, which had occupied his muse about the same time as THE CUCKOW.

*. . . she, that whilome begger-like her beggers ape
did sing,*

*Which iniur'd by the guilt of time to light she durst
not bring.*

The poem appeared in print in 1627, eleven years after Niccols's death, with no prefatory material and with a title-page that effectively baffled the reader. Until Niccols's assertion of authorship was noted,¹ the poem was attributed to Drayton, and no one has explained "the guilt of time" which prevented him from bringing the manuscript to light in 1607. The solution lies in an understanding of court life and political events during Niccols's residence at Oxford and their probable effect on the young poet who adopted Spenser's subjects and method and saw the age through his eyes.

Niccols matriculated at Magdalen College in November 1602, at the age of eighteen. Six years earlier he had embarked with the victorious expedition

¹ See J. P. Collier, BIBLIOGRAPHICAL ACCOUNT, III, 45.

against Cadiz in the *ARK*, flagship of the fleet, where he had learned to revere the Lord Admiral Charles Howard, Earl of Nottingham, commander-in-chief against the Armada. During Niccols's first year at Oxford Queen Elizabeth died. Observing that Sir Robert Cecil and Henry Howard, Earl of Northampton, were advanced as soon as James secured the throne, he recalled Spenser's opinion of the Cecils. He saw Sir Walter Raleigh and Henry Percy, Earl of Northumberland, rejected at court, whereas two of the Herberts, Philip, later Earl of Pembroke and Montgomery, and Edward, later Baron of Cherbury, unworthy men, were honored. In November, 1603, Raleigh was unfairly tried for participation in the Main Plot and committed to the Tower; two years later the Star Chamber sent Northumberland to keep him company on a flimsy pretext of complicity in the Gunpowder Plot. Vice, error, favoritism, injustice, as Niccols saw it, were rampant. He had to do something. He determined to open the eyes of England with an allegorical fable of the Lion's court, as Spenser in 1591 had done in *MOTHER HUBBERD'S TALE*.

A synopsis with a point by point interpretation of the allegory² would rob the reader of his chief joy, that of making the application for himself. A few hints, on the contrary, might prove useful. The main characters are the Ape and the Fox, representing,

² See Hoyt H. Hudson, "John Hepwith's Spenserian Satire upon Buckingham," *HUNTINGTON LIBRARY BULLETIN*, No. 6 (November, 1934), pp. 66-9, for illuminating notes. For analogues and a study of the allegorical fable in the seventeenth century, see *HARVARD UNIVERSITY... SUMMARIES OF THESES . . . 1932* (Cambridge, 1933), pp. 254-7.

respectively, Sir Robert Cecil and the Earl of Northampton, James's chief counselors. The portrait of the Ape [Sig. A 3 VERSO] is particularly vicious. Cecil was a short person, about five feet three, with a slight curvature of the spine, which the fashion of dress in his day served to exaggerate. His wry neck, splay feet, and crooked back were lampooned frequently. To his friends he was "little elf," "pigmy," "little beagle," "parrot," "Tom Derry"; to his enemies, "hunchback," "crouchback," "hobgoblin," "monkey."³ The Fox, as Northampton, son of the Earl of Surrey, elicited less of Niccols's spleen. That Northampton recommended Cecil is evident from James's first letter in the secret CORRESPONDENCE: ". . . long before this tyme, 3 [Lord Henry Howard] dealt uerrie earnistlie with 30 [King James] to take a goode conceate of 10 [Sec. Cecil]." The Fox is scheming and unprincipled, but less offensive than the Ape, and his punishment is less severe.

The brave Horse who defeated the Ass in a foot-race before the Lion is the Lord Admiral, the Earl of Nottingham. The Ox's triumphant portrait of him [Sig. D 4] no doubt expressed the general esteem in which he was held. Niccols had not forgotten the Cadiz expedition and three years later he dedicated A WINTER NIGHT'S VISION to Nottingham. The noble Elephant, who curtailed the revenues of the Ape and

³ The woodcut of the monkey on the title-page was impressed from the same block which William Jaggard used for the monkey on p. 2 of Edward Topsell's *HISTORIE OF FOUR-FOOTED BEASTES*, 1607. That Niccols in the same year was composing his *BEGGERS APE* is noteworthy.

⁴ CORRESPONDENCE OF KING JAMES VI OF SCOTLAND WITH SIR ROBERT CECIL AND OTHERS, ed. John Bruce (Camden Society, 1861), p. 2.

Fox and declaimed against the Ape at the trial [Sig. E 2], is Thomas Sackville, Earl of Dorset, the Lord Treasurer.⁵ Niccols had apparently not realized the intimate friendship that existed between Cecil and Dorset.

The Goat and the Ass, for whom the arch-conspirators procured knighthoods, are respectively Philip and Edward Herbert. The Goat, a gallant and "a lover borne," at the age of thirteen was a suitor for the hand of Mary, heiress of Sir William Herbert of St. Julians; the next year his father attempted to negotiate a marriage for him with the daughter of Sir Arthur Gorges for £5000; in December, 1604, after "long love and many changes," he married the third daughter of the seventeenth Earl of Oxford. His career subsequent to 1604 showed him still worthier of the title with which Niccols had dubbed him. But his portrait, like that of the Fox, is not vicious. The only character, in fact, on which Niccols cast opprobrium equal to that of the Ape, is the Ass. famous later as first Lord Herbert of Cherbury. writer of philosophical works and an AUTOBIOGRAPHY. After the death of his father, Richard Herbert, Esq., in 1596, the Ass left his "Countrey home," Montgomery Castle, and two years later married the heiress of St. Julians, mentioned above. Two fortunes were thus at his disposal. At Oxford he learned languages, fencing, and horsemanship. In April, 1603, he pre-

⁵ Noted first by Collier, p. 45. Portraits of the "Elephant," the "Horse," The "Fox" and the "Ape" may be seen in the well-known painting of the CONFERENCE OF THE ENGLISH AND SPANISH PLENIPOTENTIARIES, 1604, by Marc Gheeraedts the Younger, in the National Portrait Gallery.

sented himself at court, and with the Goat on July 25. 1603, was made a Knight of the Bath. His AUTOBIOGRAPHY for that period is the best commentary on his vanity and love of spectacle. "I could tell," he wrote after the ceremonies attendant on his creation. "how much my person was commended by the lords and ladies that came to see the solemnity then used; but I shall flatter myself too much if I believed it."⁶ As to a tilt with Nottingham, the AUTOBIOGRAPHY records only this: "I intended to go with Charles, Earl of Nottingham, the Lord Admiral, who went to Spain [March, 1605] . . . Howbeit, by the industry of some near me, who desired to stay me at home, I was hindered; and . . . made Sheriff of Montgomeryshire."⁷ Herbert of Cherbury was notorious for stretching the truth to fit his own preconceived picture of himself. In all probability he had had a tiff with Nottingham while the Spanish trip was preparing, and had been bested.

The "silly Sheepe" and humble Ox, who by the machinations of the Ape and Fox were accused of treason before the Lion's council, are respectively Sir Walter Raleigh and Henry Percy, Earl of Northumberland. As the secret CORRESPONDENCE shows, Cecil and Northampton had designed their downfall long before James came to the throne. The discontented courtier had no place in James's court. Raleigh was quickly seized for alleged complicity in Lord Cobham's Plot, as quickly and unjustly tried, and hurried off to the twelve-year imprisonment which preceded

⁶ AUTOBIOGRAPHY, ed. Sidney Lee (London, 1906), p. 44.

⁷ *IBID.*, pp. 45-6.

his execution. Northumberland was so unfortunate as to have a kinsman, Thomas Percy, who was one of the chief conspirators in the Gunpowder Plot. Thomas had dined with him the day before the plot was discovered. On June 27, 1606, Northumberland was tried for contempt and misprision of treason, and condemned to the Tower for life. It was doubtless after Northumberland's unjust treatment that Niccols began his poem. Cecil and Northampton never experienced the catastrophe which meted out justice to the Ape and the Fox in the poem. Niccols was expressing merely his notion of what should be done.

Apparently only one impression of THE BEGGERS APE was made, the one here reproduced. Collier's assumption⁸ that the Poem was printed in 1607 and withdrawn from circulation because it offended the government seems unwarranted. The impression was doubtless small. The few surviving copies are distributed as follows: the British Museum, the Bodleian, the Huntington Library, Harvard University Library, the collection of Sir R. L. Harmsworth, the William A. White copy now in the custody of Dr. A. S. W. Rosenbach. The chief significance of the poem today, outside the obvious Spenserian touches, is that it furnishes the key to MOTHER HUBBERD'S TALE. For the Ape that cavorts so amusingly and treacherously through the pages of Niccols's poem is the same Ape that had its tail cut in Spenser's poem, and there represents the same man, Sir Robert Cecil.

BRICE HARRIS

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⁸ Collier, p. 45.

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The beggars a

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